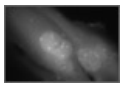
Cancer Cells Eat Themselves To Survive.

Printed from https://www.cancerquest.org/newsroom/2011/11/cancer-cells-eat-themselves-survive on 11/15/2026



Cancer cells divide in an out of control manner. To constantly make new copies of themselves, they need lots of energy and raw materials. Scientists have shown that one way they get what the need is to digest their own components and recycle them. The process is known as autophagy (self-eating) and cancer cells seem to rely on a particular type of autophagy, chaperone-mediated autophagy (CMA). In this form, proteins to be broken down for parts are guided to their destruction by other proteins, chaperones.

When researchers blocked the activity of the chaperones, the cancer cells were not able to get the parts they needed to reproduce, instead many of them died. Because CMA is not common in normal cells, the researchers hope to target the process in cancer patients.

Source
http://stm.sciencemag.org/content/3/109/109ra117
Learn More
Learn More